United Nations S/PV.4748

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4748th meeting

Wednesday, 30 April 2003, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Aguilar Zinser	(Mexico)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Chile	Mr. Valdés
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

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03-34091 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and with the consent of the Council, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations to the representatives of Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Georgia, Greece, Indonesia, Japan and South Africa to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil), Mr. Heinbecker (Canada), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Adamia (Georgia), Mr. Vassilakis (Greece), Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia), Mr. Haraguchi (Japan) and Mr. Kumalo (South Africa) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Jan Kavan, President of the General Assembly.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Kavan to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Gert Rosenthal, President of the Economic and Social Council.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Rosenthal to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to highlight the participation at this meeting of the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Jan Kavan; the President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Gert Rosenthal; and the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, to whom we extend a warm welcome; I also highlight the presence of States not members of the Security Council.

This is a defining moment for the Organization. The international situation presents challenges of a very diverse nature, making the presence of the United Nations imperative. Its values, its principles and its institutional strength make it the ideal forum for confronting global challenges related to the threats of malnutrition, the spread of endemic diseases, the destruction of the environment and, very urgently, constant disruptions of the peace. For that reason, the presidency is grateful that, at this very important moment for the Organization, the organs of the United Nations are meeting here to consider together the role that the United Nations should play in post-conflict situations.

Today, we must demonstrate unity of purpose and objectives in facing the new challenges to the international community. We have chosen the theme of "the United Nations after conflicts" because it reflects the excellent work that the Organization has been doing over the years, not only in conflict prevention but in restoring security conditions, the rule of law, the protection of human rights, institution-building and the restoration of socio-economic conditions in States that have emerged from conflict.

This is a time when we must guarantee the primary responsibility of the United Nations as a whole for the maintenance of international peace and security. We hope that, as a result of this exercise, we shall be able to move forward with specific proposals and ideas as to the best way in which the United Nations can and should work on behalf of countries emerging from armed conflict.

The recent successful United Nations experiences in the work of rebuilding, in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Timor-Leste, show us the importance that the international community attaches to working in its various components on the basis of

cooperation. Here, in their , capacities for complementarity and planning, United Nations bodies should demonstrate their ability to cooperate and to work together.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: Let me start by thanking you, Mr. President, and your Government for initiating this discussion of the lessons to be derived from the experience of the United Nations in previous conflict and post-conflict situations.

As members know, the United Nations has been engaged in a wide range of activities in this area, from the negotiation of political settlements to profound institutional reconstruction efforts, including the creation of a new State. Reviewing such past experiences can tell us what we did well and what we did less well, and perhaps the reasons in those particular circumstances. It should also help us to improve our performance over time.

But the thing that stands out when we review international engagement in countries affected by conflict is that no single approach has ever been adopted twice, because no two conflicts or post-conflict situations are alike. Even the four recent cases of Afghanistan, Kosovo, Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone are very different from one another, in terms of the causes and consequences of the conflicts, the previous involvement of the United Nations, the political and legal context governing the international community's response, and the sheer size of the affected population and territory.

Therefore, one of the most important lessons when it comes to planning the international community's engagement in a new situation, such as the one we face now in Iraq, is the need first to reach a common understanding of what makes the crisis in question unique, and then to develop our responses accordingly. We should draw on previous experiences to make our responses as effective as possible, while bearing in mind that completely new approaches or forms of assistance may be required.

That means that we need to begin by asking ourselves some fundamental questions, such as the following. Do the parties to the conflict seek, or welcome, international involvement, and, if so, for what purpose? Is the international community able, and does it have the political will, to provide the necessary financial and human resources and to sustain that commitment long enough to ensure success? What are the preconditions for ensuring a self-sustaining and durable peace? What are the needs to be addressed, and in what order of priority? At what pace does the process need to run?

A few specific lessons stand out from the recent case histories. The trust of the parties and the population can be fragile, and cannot be taken for granted over time; their consent needs to be cultivated and preserved. The role of the international community is not to solve all of a country's problems, but to help its people become self-reliant. Priorities must be set, starting with the essential humanitarian needs of the population, which include the need for basic conditions of security, law and order. Meeting those needs will also make it easier to foster the conditions in which viable political processes can emerge and grow — for instance, by promoting reconciliation, good governance, the rule of law, human rights and transitional justice initiatives.

Decisions on the reform of key State institutions and legal and political structures must, if they are to be sustainable in the long run, be taken by the people of the country themselves. Such a process can succeed only if all the main groups in the country or territory play a part in it, feel that it belongs to them and do not perceive it as leading to a predetermined outcome.

The pacing of the overall process, and the sequence and timing of its component parts, are also crucial to success. They need to take into account the political, security and socio-economic conditions in the country, and the degree of support that can realistically be expected from interested members of the international community. Moving too slowly risks losing momentum and fuelling frustration; but going too fast can be equally counterproductive if it means taking hurried decisions whose effects are difficult to reverse.

The regional dimension needs early and sustained attention.

Lastly, there is a direct correlation between United Nations success and Security Council unity, and between United Nations setbacks and divisions among Council members, about the strategy to be pursued. The Council must be united in setting out the overall

objectives for international assistance and a clear division of labour, and must then maintain its unity in providing strong political support, both during rough periods when progress is at risk and when the acute phase of the conflict has passed and no longer commands the attention of the world's media.

In the case of Iraq, which, of course, we all have in mind at the moment, the Council now has the chance to leave behind earlier disagreements and to find unity of purpose in the post-war phase.

Those decisions will not be easy, but they should not be impossible if the Council keeps some shared principles firmly in mind. As they debate those issues, I would urge Council members to set aside past divisions and to ask themselves what would help the Iraqi people most. Their interests must come first. The overriding objective must be to enable the Iraqi people to take charge of their own destiny.

Already, in resolution 1472 (2003), the Council has reaffirmed its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, its respect for the right of its people to determine their own political future and to control their own natural resources, and its belief that all parties must abide by their obligations under international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention.

I am sure all the members of the Council would agree that sovereignty implies political independence and that, in order to determine their political future, the Iraqi people must be free to choose their own system of Government and political leadership. What is needed is an impartial, representative and transparent process leading to the choice, by Iraqis themselves, of a credible and legitimate Iraqi political authority to which sovereignty can be restored. I trust that the members of the Council would also agree on the need to put an end to Iraq's isolation and to help the people of Iraq, as quickly as possible, to establish conditions for a normal life.

Over the coming weeks, the Council will have important decisions to take on existing mandates within the context of the new situation — notably on the issues of sanctions, the oil-for-food programme and weapons inspections. Beyond that, it will need to consider how best the international community can help Iraqis rebuild their country and what part the United Nations might play in assisting that effort and in the process of restoring Iraqi sovereignty.

I hope I can rely on the Council to ensure that any mandate it entrusts to the United Nations is clear, coherent and matched by the necessary resources. In just over 20 years the Iraqi people have lived through three wars and over 10 years of harsh United Nations sanctions. Let us all set aside our past disagreements, ask what will help the Iraqi people most, and act accordingly.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement, for his vision, for his views and for the challenges he has presented to us for our consideration this morning.

Before proceeding, I should like to welcome the presence among us in the Chamber of a delegation of Senators from the Mexican Congress. With us are Senator Silvia Hernández of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, Senator Eduardo Ovando of the Institutional Revolutionary Party and Senator Fernando Margain of the National Action Party.

I now call on His Excellency Mr. Jan Kavan, President of the General Assembly.

Mr. Kavan: Let me express at the outset my great appreciation for your initiative, Mr. President, and for giving me the opportunity to speak on this very important topic. Although never quite fulfilling the mandate of international trusteeship as described in the United Nations Charter, the United Nations has engaged in governance of post-conflict societies, particularly in the post-cold-war era.

The United Nations has extensive experience in governance, through setting up United Nations administrations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and East Timor, and in post-conflict peace-building efforts in Sierra Leone and most recently in Afghanistan. Currently the most outstanding challenge before the Security Council with respect to post-conflict reconstruction is the situation in Iraq.

Since the end of the cold war, the traditional United Nations involvement in post-conflict situations, focusing on political dimensions, has evolved into a much more comprehensive operation undertaking a variety of roles. The four basic pillars of post-conflict reconstruction — security, social and economic well-being, justice and reconciliation, and governance and participation — are all closely linked. A positive outcome in one field depends upon successful implementation in the others. The international

community has major abilities to influence the security situation in post-conflict States and regions. It is the military authorities in charge of a territory who are responsible for building on and sustaining the security situation. However, returning the responsibility for maintaining security to the host country should be regarded as a priority. Forming a multi-ethnic police force in Bosnia and Kosovo and training the Afghani army have been, in my opinion, steps in the right direction.

When considering the socio-economic aspects of post-conflict initiatives, the main emphasis has typically been economic rebuilding and development. But war affects society in a very profound way and tends to disrupt social relations — from national and political to very basic human interactions. I believe that only a healthy society — where social relations are restored, life is lived with dignity, free of oppression or hunger and is fully respected, and where gender perspective is taken into account — can promote and sustain durable peace and development.

Through establishing a process for addressing past and present grievances, the objective of creating a fair, transparent and effective judicial system is closely linked to the issues of reconciliation. Prosecution of crimes against humanity and gross violations of human rights is often hindered by the existence of political and legal obstacles. The United Nations war crimes tribunals prosecuting crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda or Sierra Leone, as well as efforts to establish extraordinary chambers within the existing court structure of Cambodia for prosecution of crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge, play a crucial role in reconciliation efforts of post-conflict societies.

Although there are inherent tensions between the promotion of democracy and previous power structures, strengthening good governance and promoting democracy are crucial for preventing the recurrence of conflicts in crisis-ridden countries. The collapse of civil administrations, for example in Kosovo and East Timor, required the United Nations to assume large-scale government functions. However, a long-term process of good governance and democratization must be driven by citizens of the country and must reflect its specific historical, cultural, political and religious conditions.

In post-conflict situations, much more is needed than efforts by States to restore law and order. Taking the historical background into account — whether represented by ethnic relations in the Balkans or tribal relations in Afghanistan — is crucial to any successful peace-building efforts. It is not only about bringing peace or humanitarian aid into a society emerging from conflict. Any external involvement in the society's affairs must be conducted in a manner most respectful of the various specific features of that society and of its rich diversity.

The latest conflict in Iraq is an example of the complex and unique challenges facing the United Nations in a post-conflict situation. I have no doubt that this crisis will become a new important source of knowledge and experience for the United Nations. The Organization should use this knowledge to refine its methods and improve ways of addressing future conflict situations to be more effective, to be an organization that can select the appropriate strategies and tools for preventing or de-escalating conflict and facilitating peaceful solutions.

Iraq's post-conflict society is confronted with various problems of instability. They include unresolved issues relating to years of political and religious oppression, violence among different clans, dangers stemming from the past totalitarian structures, looting, and an abundance of arms in the absence of effective new local police or security forces. Recent United Nations experiences elsewhere, for example in Kosovo or East Timor, have clearly demonstrated that a comprehensive strategy to tackle these issues in the immediate post-conflict phase is critical. Furthermore, it has become evident that a strategy for political and economic reforms should be crafted in conjunction with an overall vision for democratization of the Iraqi society.

The role of the United Nations in Iraq should not be confined only to an advisory role or reduced to the provision of humanitarian or economic aid, although these issues are extremely important. Broader responsibilities aimed at promoting democracy in Iraq should be part of any planning process.

For all its shortcomings, real or perceived, the United Nations is still the only forum which has the grass-roots experience and personnel to deal with a wide range of crises, whether in humanitarian relief, helping people to rebuild their lives and countries, promoting human rights and the rule of law, conflict management or post-conflict peace-building.

I am confident that the United Nations needs to play a vital role in both the economic reconstruction and the political transformation of post-conflict Iraq. I do believe that it is in the clear interests of both the United Nations and the United States authorities, as Secretary-General Kofi Annan just said, to find a unity of purpose or to reach a working agreement on the exact nature of such mutually complementary cooperation in that country. I do strongly believe that such cooperation will undoubtedly help to bring about the common aim of the establishment of a democratic, free, sovereign and independent Iraq.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on Mr. Gert Rosenthal, President of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Rosenthal (*spoke in Spanish*): In my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council, I appreciate the invitation extended to us to participate in this open meeting of the Security Council.

I would like to make use of the few minutes allocated to me to make four points.

In the first place, if we were to identify one single issue that offers the possibility of a more productive interaction between our two Councils, it would no doubt be the attention that the United Nations accords to countries emerging from conflict. The clearest example is found in the decision adopted by the Economic and Social Council in July last year to create an Ad Hoc Advisory Group On African Countries emerging from conflict. That decision found concrete expression in the creation, in October of 2002, of the first of such groups, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau. That Group, mandated to examine the humanitarian and economic needs of the country and to promote international cooperation to that end, expressly includes among its members the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. We trust that this pioneering action of cooperation between our two Councils is a harbinger of an even more fruitful interaction in the future.

Secondly, for several years now various forums of the United Nations have been insisting on the need to deepen reciprocal support between themselves and the Bretton Woods institutions. Among many other aspects, this is a matter that is not alien to the Security Council in its peace-building efforts. Our own forum has achieved important progress in consolidating that mutual support and in enhancing coherence, cooperation and coordination between the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization. I believe that during our recent Economic and Social Council meeting of 14 April, held in the context of follow-up activities to the Monterrey Consensus, we took an important step in that direction.

Thirdly and in more general terms, under the orientation of the General Assembly, both of our Councils reflect, institutionally, the two great pillars on which the United Nations reposes: the maintenance of peace and constructive coexistence among nations, on the one hand, and economic and social development, respect for human rights and humanitarian assistance, on the other. The Charter itself lays out some connecting vessels between the three organs mentioned — as the President of the General Assembly has just reminded us — and praxis has added additional links, such as those I have just mentioned. We must continue to deepen this trend, since, as banal as it may sound, it is nevertheless a truism that without development there is no peace and that without peace there is no development.

Finally, and in the context of the United Nations system of governance, we would like to believe that the strengths of each of our organs tend to be transmitted to the others, but we also recognize that the same holds true regarding weaknesses. For this reason, we trust that the recent differences in points of view that have characterized the Security Council regarding the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq can be overcome in the next phases that this forum will have to address on the matter. As the Secretary-General recalled, should this not be forthcoming, all our organs and the United Nations in its entirety will suffer the consequences.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to convey to you, Sir, my delegation's gratitude for having organized this open wrap-up meeting of the work of the Security Council for April 2003. I also wish to thank our Secretary-General, who has taken time out from his heavy schedule to address the Council, reflecting the importance of today's meeting.

The presence in this Chamber of the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social

Council, as well as representatives of regional groups, is a sure sign that we will have a constructive exchange of views.

More than a mere recapitulation of our activities during your presidency, the theme we are addressing this morning — the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations — is part of the larger context of the basic mission of our Council: the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security.

Before I tackle the crux of this subject, my delegation wishes to recall that conflicts throughout the world are caused by a variety of complex phenomena, which I shall not go into at this point. These problems, which must necessarily be addressed, cannot be overcome so long as conflicts have not been identified and resolved once and for all.

My delegation is convinced that the consolidation of peace and security is closely linked to development and the establishment of true democracy. There can be no development without peace, since peace is a constituent element of development.

The restoration of State authority, the creation of a viable judicial system and of national security forces, and the establishment of an inclusive dialogue and a policy of national reconciliation are also guarantees for the definitive return of stability.

Along the same lines, due attention should be given to the establishment of effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes for ex-combatants, including child soldiers. Unless there is adequate funding to that end, their beneficiaries may swiftly return to their former way of life and thus imperil the fragile balance that had been so difficult to obtain. The civic education of populations, particularly young people, is part of that picture. Young people are the living spirit of a country who will go on to assume responsibility for its well-being.

The promotion and consolidation of peace necessarily involves combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, for we must acknowledge that war is most conducive to the illicit trade in and proliferation of those weapons. The use of mercenaries, which we must combat with all our strength, finds a highly favourable terrain in this respect.

The return of peace, particularly in African countries, is always accompanied by an intense movement of displaced persons and refugees who wish to return home. Every effort must be made to ensure the proper management of that return process by providing funds sufficient to meet the essential needs of those people.

My delegation believes that the elimination of conflicts must be accompanied by the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive and integrated programme for economic recovery, including job creation and quick-impact projects. The situation in which Guinea-Bissau and Afghanistan now find themselves reinforces that truth.

Peacekeeping operations throughout the world teach us that the withdrawal of troops has to be carried out gradually and must go hand in hand with the progressive restoration of a climate of security. The examples of Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste are instructive in that regard.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to point out that partnership and complementarity between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations remain essential because from that interaction can be born a real synergy capable of ensuring that restored peace endures.

In addition to that synergy, we must all engage to promote internal cooperation between the Security Council, on the one hand, and, on the other, the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and the funds and programmes of the United Nations for the success of post-conflict management.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to begin by commending the energy and effectiveness with which you, Mr. President, have led our work throughout this month, which has been a particularly testing and difficult month. Thanks to your skill, your consummate art of contact and your great sense of moderation, you have been able to lay the foundation for harmonious discussion in the Council. We are grateful for this, and we congratulate you.

We welcome the presence and participation at this meeting of the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council. We thank them for their important statements.

In the course of your presidency, Sir, the Security Council has had to consider a wide range of situations in which peace was in peril either because of the threat

of breakdown or because it was still fragile. I am thinking of Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic and Iraq, to mention only some. It is natural that the last meeting of the Council under your presidency is devoted to the important topic of the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations.

We are all aware that the nature of war, beyond the loss of human life, is to destroy the socio-economic and political infrastructure of the countries affected. Therefore, the first task — I was going to say the sole task — in the post-conflict period is to build and rebuild. Life must be rebuilt, first by giving the afflicted population a renewed taste and desire for life by restoring their dignity as autonomous human beings and as masters of their own destiny, as the Secretary-General has just recalled. Rebuilding life also means giving countries structures and institutions that will enable people to develop and to live a different kind of life.

Over time, the United Nations has acquired unique experience in this area and in recent years has considerably expanded its capacities. The integrated and multisectoral approach taken by the Organization, as well as the valuable support of its partners, today enable it to achieve ever greater success in peace-building and reconstruction operations on all continents.

Africa requires particular attention here. The extreme poverty of its population, the major pandemics, the fragile nature of State structures and the covetous ambitions of external parties render the conflicts even more complicated and disastrous. If we are not careful, conflicts are likely to lead to further conflicts.

In that regard, the efforts of the United Nations should as a matter of priority focus on financing, with the support of funds and donors for the coordination of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, holding and monitoring elections, rebuilding State structures, promoting confidence-building measures, human rights for men, women and children, and economic recovery. In Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Angola, the application of that approach, in everyone's opinion, has achieved considerable success, and we welcome that.

We note with great satisfaction last year's creation in the Security Council of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and, within the Economic and Social Council, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflicts. The close cooperation between these two entities in the case of Guinea-Bissau at the start of this year made it possible to carry out a simultaneous assessment of that country's socio-economic and security problems. That assessment will make it possible to address the overall situation in the country in a comprehensive and consistent fashion and will likely make it possible to eliminate the risk of a resurgence of conflict.

We believe that it is right for the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to intensify this cooperation and to extend it to other, similar situations. In Somalia, where hostilities have been going on for more than a decade, the Secretary-General is working to set up a programme of preparatory activities for peace-building and recovery. That anticipatory and progressive approach could equally be applied to situations in which the crises tend to be endlessly protracted, such as in Central Africa.

Moreover, we believe that the United Nations should strengthen its role in the implementation and follow-up of measures taken to restore and strengthen peace by its organs, in particular the Security Council and the International Court of Justice.

In this regard, the support given by the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea for the implementation of the decision take on 13 April 2003 by the Commission charged with demarcating the boundary between the two countries is a good example, which should be emulated in similar cases.

However, the major challenge for the United Nations remains mobilizing funding for peace-building and reconstruction efforts in countries that are weakened by years of war and unable to meet the customary conditions set out by international donors. The United Nations should convince such donors to institute innovative methods and more flexible conditions.

In this connection, I would like to recall the commitment undertaken by heads of State or Government at the Millennium Summit, as set out in the Millennium Declaration,

> "To make the United Nations more effective in maintaining peace and security by giving it the

resources and tools it needs for conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction". (*General Assembly resolution 55/2, para. 9*)

All in all, the United Nations plays a vital, positive and effective role in post-conflict situations. However, given recent instructive events, the international community should reflect further on the role of the United Nations in certain specific post-conflict situations. In that regard, Cameroon endorses the Secretary-General's appeal to the Security Council to take the opportunity to set aside the differences of the past and unite around shared principles and actions that are to the benefit of the Iraqis, who now need to take charge of their own destiny.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): As so often, Mr. President, you have demonstrated your commendable habit of focusing our discussion on things that really do need to be talked about; I thank you for that. Our three leading speakers — the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council — have all given us a lot to think about.

The principles to be followed in this general area will be well expounded upon by the representative of Greece when he speaks later on behalf of the European Union. I want to cover some points and try to look forward, rather than backward, to what the Security Council, with its partners, should be doing in this whole area.

After a conflict there is always a fragile situation, and the agencies of the United Nations and civil society do extraordinarily well in bringing immediate relief. But the humanitarian-to-reconstruction phase still remains weak in many situations where the United Nations has a role. We have all recognized the dangers of a transition gap, and we have tried to point to that in the recent past by encouraging efforts to get the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to talk about complementary approaches to post-conflict peace-building, because none of us can deny that peace and development are inextricably linked. The Security Council cannot cut itself off into an area of peace and security alone and fail to recognize the seamlessness of events on the ground between security and economic and social issues. We, as an inter-governmental organ, have more to do on that. I think that, with the Secretary-General here, it is also fair to ask whether the structure and working methods of the Secretariat truly respond to the need for this seamless approach.

I think that in the near future we ought to look particularly at the situations in Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone. The Secretary-General has rightly said that no two situations are the same. But every situation can benefit from lessons learned from others, and every situation has certain common factors, which I do not think we have been successful in drawing together.

I hope that when we come to look at the periods after the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor and after United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, we will take them as a test of how to set a basic model — a template — for how we, as the United Nations, are going to handle the post-conflict period.

There are questions about disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and about the role of agencies on the ground and the roles and capacities of implementing partners, including the regional players, as well as international donors and civil society. Where is the coherence? Where is the operational structure to take forward the things that need to be done? We have a lot of experience of things going both right and wrong, but I am not sure we have drawn them all out into lessons for the future.

I think there are three requirements in drawing out those lessons. One is about expectations — what the United Nations can be expected to do and what it cannot be expected to do. Here I think the role of public information is very important in order to avoid misunderstandings.

Secondly, structure — the structure of the United Nations presence after a peacekeeping operation has gone — needs much more attention. We tend to walk away from it and not leave a structure on the ground — except the traditional one of inter-agency coordination through, for instance, regional coordination efforts. Sometimes that works well, but in more fragile situations it can easily go wrong. Here, liaison with the relevant regional players — the regional groups — is also very important.

Thirdly, the exit strategy for the United Nations — even from the post-conflict period — is important. We have exit strategies for peacekeeping operations. But if we have an exit strategy for a peace-

building operation, we will then have objectives for a peace-building operation — objectives which it will have to achieve before it leaves — and we will then have greater clarity, better leadership and greater competence on the ground.

Then, there are three factors that we must always bear in mind as an adjunct to all of that. Although we talk about the first of these, we still do not necessarily develop the operational response to it: the rule of law and the importance of justice and reconciliation on the ground still constitute a haphazard objective. This is something that we have got to talk about; there is a lot of good analysis now about transitional justice systems, which we can feed into our work.

Secondly, the role of women, not just in bringing about peace, but in reconstructing society, needs to be implemented on the ground from the lessons we have learned. I am very pleased to note that the next biennial meeting between the Development Assistance Committee network on gender equality and the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality will take place at Paris in July. Let us make that an operational meeting, not just a re-analysis of the role which we hope women can play. There is a role that we can structure them to play in United Nations activity.

Thirdly, economic and social development more generally has to be part of the equation on the ground. Having a Deputy Special Representative in Sierra Leone for economic and social issues was a good experiment — one that worked — and I hope that it will be applied in other areas. I think the Great Lakes region is one that could benefit particularly from an improved structure in that area as we move forward.

So yes, we as the United Nations have played key roles in Sierra Leone, Kosovo, East Timor, Afghanistan and other missions, and we must not underestimate the benefits of drawing on the expertise gained in these operations as we plan future ones. Too often I think the United Nations experience has been that we re-learn our lessons in each new operation; and mistakes are made accordingly.

There are elements of previous missions that are relevant and can be applied in the future to the situation on the ground, and we must apply them. The Secretary-General is absolutely right to remind us of the fundamental criterion: the interests of the people of the country concerned. They should be the guiding spirit of what we are doing, within an acceptable political framework for them on the ground. We need to apply that experience, and the potential of the United Nations, more effectively to those ends.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the agreed format for this meeting, I now call on the representative of Greece. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia, and the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, declare that they align themselves with this statement.

Please accept my warm congratulations, Mr. President, on your initiative to hold this meeting. The quest for peace being a constant — if often elusive — goal, the international community has constantly been investing in formulating ways and advancing mechanisms to achieve long-lasting peace and security.

The European Union wishes to reaffirm that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the Security Council and that the United Nations has a central role to play in the peace-building process in order to achieve stability and legitimacy in post-conflict State-building, utilizing its unique capacity and experience. Peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building are often closely interrelated. That interrelationship requires a comprehensive approach in order to preserve the results achieved and to prevent the re-emergence of conflicts.

The European Union believes that this quest for peace also requires a comprehensive, concerted and determined approach to address the root causes of conflicts, including the economic, social, political, cultural and humanitarian problems that are often associated with them. In that respect, effective peace-building requires action — both long-term and short-term — that aims at addressing areas such as sustainable development, good governance, the eradication of poverty and inequality, the promotion of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. Economic rehabilitation and reconstruction, in particular, constitute important elements in the long-term development of post-conflict societies and in the

maintenance of lasting peace; international assistance also plays an important role in that regard.

The European Union believes that a comprehensive peace-building strategy must involve all the relevant actors in those fields and should take into account the specific circumstances of each conflict situation. The European Union believes that non-governmental organizations and civil society play important and complementary roles in consolidating peace, in promoting reconciliation and in strengthening democratic institutions. We believe that strong democratic institutions can help societies reduce the likelihood of resorting to violence.

The European Union has been constant in recognizing the important role that regional organizations can play in post-conflict situations, in particular by building institutional mechanisms that will deal with conflicts in a more structured and more coherent way. We also firmly support close interaction and cooperation with the Security Council in facing those problems. Such cooperation requires an assessment of needs, information-sharing and coordination. We welcome an active role for the United Nations, specifically in the areas of information-sharing, promoting transparency, mobilizing support and stimulating contacts between recipients and donors of assistance in various areas such as training, equipment and logistics.

The European Union, within the context of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), its member States and the European Commission play an active role in supporting and strengthening United Nations peacekeeping and peace-building activities around the world. European Union member States contribute military and civilian police personnel, and — along with the European Commission — they provide personnel for financial, logistical, technical and political support for most African peace operations, mediation and peace processes. In that context, the European Union also welcomes the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to work closely with all relevant actors in Africa at the regional, subregional and national levels, in particular for the enhancement of the capabilities of troop contributors and in capacity-building for regional and subregional organizations.

The European Union would like to underline the significance of including peace-building elements in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, as is the case with the important preventive role played by the civilian police, one of the priorities of the ESDP in the civilian field.

The European Union's first crisis management operation, the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, began functioning on 1 January this year. That operation was conceived and established as a follow-up to the United Nations International Police Task Force based in Bosnia for the past seven years, and is aimed at consolidating the success of the United Nations Mission in reforming the Bosnia and Herzegovina police and in ensuring that the achievements of the United Nations are sustained over time.

The European Union emphasizes the need for the United Nations to develop peace-building capacities and strategies and to implement programmes to support them. That requires increased solidarity, sustained political will and adequate resources on the part of the international community.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Brazil. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this wrap-up meeting on the work of the Security Council. Meetings on this item are an excellent opportunity for States Members of the Organization that are not represented on the Council to share their vision with regard to the work of this body. The innovation of proposing a specific theme for the meeting seems to me a valid initiative that could give added value to the exercise in reflection that these meetings should be.

The chosen theme is very propitious. Today, we are far from the time immediately following the end of the cold war, when we all nurtured the hope that, once the obstacles created by the bipolar reality had been overcome, the Security Council would recover its unity and would be able to exercise its role of global leadership in the settlement of international conflicts. I speak of a world system based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The current period is marked by uncertainty and instability, which serve to heighten the possibility of conflict and which may thus lead to an increase in post-conflict

situations in which the United Nations may be called upon to play its role. Post-conflict situations are, by their very nature, complex, and they invariably have tragic humanitarian effects.

It is also promising that dialogue is taking place in the Security Council in accordance with the mandate the Charter has established for it. As we are all aware, ensuring an adequate resolution of the issues remaining at the end of armed conflicts, such as those the Secretary-General referred to this morning, is necessary to guarantee that peace is built on solid foundations. The situation in Timor-Leste, which was the subject of an open meeting of the Council the day before yesterday, is a very clear example of this. Timor-Leste is frequently referred to as a success for the United Nations. The case of Timor-Leste proves that coordinated action on the multilateral level can be effective and that the international community is capable of acting through the Security Council. However, we must recognize that the same attention from the international community will also be required in the new situation.

The role of the United Nations in post-conflict periods is not limited to action coordinated within the Council. Many of the tasks involved in post-conflict stabilization processes entail creating conditions favourable to economic and social development, something that goes well beyond the Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security. It is therefore most appropriate that the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council are present at this meeting.

Efforts to ensure better coordination between the actions of the main bodies of the United Nations, as well as between other bodies and institutions, are not new. When Brazil was last a member of the Security Council, in 1998 and 1999, the Council held an open debate devoted to the topic of the maintenance of international peace and security and post-conflict peace-building. That discussion underscored the need for the bodies of the United Nations system — and in particular those directly involved in post-conflict peace-building — to cooperate closely and to maintain a dialogue in accordance with their respective responsibilities. Last year, that approach resulted in the establishment of a coordinating mechanism between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council for African countries emerging from armed conflict, of which the ad hoc advisory group on Guinea-Bissau was the first manifestation.

Coordination with regional organizations is another avenue that should be explored. The holding, on 11 April this year, of a meeting with regional organizations to discuss how to handle new challenges to international peace and security is an initiative that should be expanded.

In a world of expanding globalization, the nature of the challenges we face today lends more truth to the notion that we cannot legitimately aspire solely to promoting a more peaceful world. At a time of transition, such as the current period, multilateral institutions are more necessary than ever. Because of its political nature and legal standing, the Charter of the United Nations continues to be the most suitable tool for creating a climate of cooperation conducive to preventing, insofar as possible, international conflicts and to finding coherent solutions for the post-conflict period.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): First of all, I would like to commend you, Mr. President, for this very good initiative. This wrap-up session, and the fact that you have invited the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council to take part in it, is indeed very commendable. I would also like to say that the presence of the Secretary-General among us is very indicative of the importance of the topics we are discussing this morning.

The subject we are considering is of very particular interest to the international community, with post-conflict situations in Africa, Asia and, more recently, Iraq. This is therefore a topic of great relevancy and, in particular, of great currency.

My country, Angola, is probably the only member of the Council that is fully involved in a post-conflict situation. We have had a long-standing and important relationship with the United Nations, which continues to play a fundamental role in the prevailing post-conflict situation.

The assistance provided by the international community during Angola's period of national emergency caused by war saved millions of Angolan lives from starvation, disease and the most appalling conditions of misery. The solidarity of the international community, in particular the Security Council's stance, was very instrumental in bringing the war to an end.

Fortunately, the war is over and Angola is facing the future with confidence, assured of the continued support and assistance of the United Nations. We are attentive to post-conflict experiences. The contribution of this meeting is therefore very relevant to us.

The Angolan Government has pledged to complete the peace process, in particular the social re-insertion of demobilized and displaced persons and refugees, and to promote a policy of tolerance to pave the way for the holding of general elections and the consolidation of democratic institutions.

We believe that the assistance of the United Nations is a vital factor in the consolidation of the peace process and in assisting with the return of demobilized soldiers, internally displaced persons and refugees to their places of origin. That process, which is the most important goal of the current phase of Angola's recovery programme, is directly linked to emergency rehabilitation and to the reactivation of the basic social services and local capacities necessary to address the most pressing needs of vulnerable populations in the areas most affected by the war.

The World Bank is engaged in Angola's post-conflict reconstruction, particularly by approving a transitional assistance strategy in support of the Government's programme for the demobilization of former combatants and the resettlement of displaced peoples. That support will result in the recovery of the rural economy and provide a permanent contribution to reducing poverty. The World Bank and UNDP are both providing assistance to the Government in building its capacity to provide coordination and support for both humanitarian and development activities.

United Nations agencies and other international organizations including UNICEF, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), UN-HABITAT and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), are all involved in the development of specific programmes that are part of the transition towards reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction for development.

The other very important component of the governance strategy for the transition period in which the United Nations system is involved is related to the building of institutional capacity, particularly State administration, in areas that have been, for years, outside political control. Priority is given to the municipal levels in which UNDP is involved.

Macroeconomic reforms are another component of the strategy for the transitional period, and the Government of Angola is currently engaged with the IMF in negotiations on an appropriate institutional framework. The World Bank is implementing a project which provides technical assistance for economic management. This project is designed to help the Angolan Government increase financial transparency in the State sector and upgrade the existing policy and institutional framework. It is our expectation that this project will be a decisive contribution to motivate again the donor community to provide the needed resources to allow the United Nations system to play the essential role in the consolidation of peace and the country's development.

Angola is committed to work with the United Nations and all countries willing to contribute to its economic and social recovery. The donor community is a fundamental partner with the United Nations and the Angolan Government in that endeavour. In various instances, financial and human efforts that the Government has invested in the immense task of rebuilding the country have been recognized, and we look forward to the United Nations playing a pivotal role in materializing these objectives.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Today's topic is very current. Unless there is a comprehensive approach to conflict resolution I do not think it is possible to hope for any possibility of restoring lasting peace in countries that have emerged from a crisis. Experience has shown that the United Nations peacekeeping operations are becoming increasingly complex and include more and more peace-building components. In this connection, coordination between the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations is particularly important. This has already been spoken of today, and we are delighted to welcome the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council to our meeting.

With the participation of the United Nations specialized agencies, a comprehensive approach requires that there be no gap when making the transition from one aspect of conflict resolution to another. It is important that the Security Council

provide the political support for the peace-building efforts in those cases when the central role is shifted to the specialized agencies.

I want to say a few words about the situations that were proposed for our discussion today. A graphic example of the importance of a comprehensive approach is Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro. Here, there is close cooperation not only between the various components of the United Nations system, but also between the regional organizations that make an important contribution to the overall cause.

Another conclusion with relation to the Kosovo question is that a particular responsibility is borne by the parties involved in a conflict. Unfortunately, the positive changes achieved in the Kosovo settlement were achieved basically due to the efforts of the international presence in that province, whereas the temporary self-governing bodies have often hampered these efforts and abused the powers entrusted to them, and have even tried to subvert basic Security Council resolutions, for instance resolution 1244 (1999). This is an important lesson we must take into account with regard to other situations.

Now in Afghanistan things are complex, but that situation is moving towards settlement. This is largely because the settlement is taking place on the basis of principles that were agreed to by the Afghans themselves, with the coordinating, even leading, role played by the United Nations. Those principles were endorsed unanimously by the Security Council. We think this is a guarantee for eventual success in Afghanistan. At this crucial stage, when we are leading up to the Constitutional Loya Jirga and the general elections, the coordinating functions of the United Nations in Afghanistan are more important than ever.

An important responsibility is entrusted to the countries of the region, including complying with the Kabul Declaration on Good-Neighbourly Relations, which was supported by the Security Council. We believe the Council could think about using that base to work out a system of comprehensive guarantees of non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

The peacekeeping lessons from Sierra Leone show how dangerous it is to let one's attention wander with regard to post-conflict social and economic restoration. There we have seen a decrease in interest of international donors in these tasks. In our view, this means that the post-conflict process has not been completed. In turn, this has become one of the reasons why this conflict has spilled over into neighbouring African countries.

Finally, with regard to Timor-Leste and the experience of complex settlement solutions, it is necessary, it is important that a flexible approach be adopted, along with quick, clear reactions to changes in the situation in the country, which is in a post-conflict phase. This is extremely important for the success of United Nations activities in the post-conflict settlement phase.

In conclusion, all of these lessons must, to a certain extent, be taken into account with regard to post-war restoration in Iraq. The Secretary-General appealed to us about this today, and the President of the General Assembly also mentioned this point, as have many other participants in our discussion. We are convinced — and here we agree with the Secretary-General — that we must clearly define what the United Nations role and the role of the Security Council will be at all stages of the post-war rebuilding of Iraq.

A special point on this issue was made yesterday by Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, after his meeting with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. The Secretary-General also raised this point today. As the President of Russia stressed, we do not rule out the possibility that a settlement could be effected in Iraq without United Nations participation. Indeed, the war was launched without United Nations authorization, but we doubt whether any settlement achieved without United Nations participation would be enduring, effective or just.

We believe, as the President of Russia suggested, that we must first identify the action to be undertaken to resolve the humanitarian problems of Iraq above and beyond the steps that have already been taken. Secondly, we must determine how to resolve the issue of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. This question is of concern to all, is directly related to the security situation in the region and the non-proliferation regime, and cannot be ignored. Russia is prepared to play a very active role in supporting the activities of the inspectors in Iraq. In this context, we must pursue and conclude the inspections in the post-war period.

With regard to humanitarian questions, we are prepared at this early stage to ease or even suspend certain sanctions directly and exclusively relating to humanitarian goods. The other components of the oil-

for-food programme could be resumed under United Nations control while some sanctions remain in effect and legitimate authority has not been established in Baghdad during this period.

We believe that a debate on all of these issues should be initiated in the Security Council and that we must decide how we can reach agreement on these questions. We are prepared for such discussions and the sooner we launch them the better it will be, in particular for the people of Iraq.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I am pleased to welcome your decision, Sir, to convene this wrap-up meeting on a matter of primary importance, following a long interruption of such meetings. Indeed, we believe that this meeting offers a great opportunity to assess the work of the Security Council for this month.

I welcome the presence at this meeting of the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council. Their participation reflects the importance of coordination among the main organs of the United Nations in a manner that serves the purposes and principles of the Charter and the interests of the entire world.

I am also pleased to pay tribute, Sir, to your wise leadership of the work of the Security Council during your presidency.

The question of the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations is of growing importance. There is no doubt that the United Nations has played a truly important role in helping many countries to overcome the consequences of conflicts that have afflicted them and in restoring the institutional structures of those countries. We believe, however, that the role of the international community in addressing the root causes of conflicts and in preventing such conflicts should continue to be of high priority on our agenda. That role is necessary in order to avert a great deal of suffering for millions of people that could have been prevented in advance, in accordance with the Arab proverb to the effect that prevention is better than treatment. This reflects the fact that money spent to address the effects of destruction is better invested in the economic and social development of those countries, preventing the eruption of conflict and sidelining narrow, selfish interests.

The United Nations has had many successful experiences in post-conflict peace-building, the benefits of which are crystal-clear to all in many instances. I shall mention but a few examples, such as that of Sierra Leone, although there remains a great deal to do there. There are also the examples of Timor-Leste, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Angola, the Congo and, most recently, Iraq. Iraq sorely needs the United Nations to assume a significant role in helping the Iraqi people to rebuild their country.

The success of the United Nations in such cases can clearly be attributed to the assertion of political will by the international community to assist those societies and countries and to implement an ambitious development programme, including programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants and the reintegration of internally displaced persons and refugees; development projects; and the restoration of State institutions. Such ambitious programmes could not have been even partially successful without international political and financial assistance or the availability of resources.

We now turn to the question of Iraq. In his statement today, the Secretary-General focused on this problem. The United Nations must assume a prominent role in helping the Iraqi people to maintain its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. We must enable the Iraqi people to elect its own Government in total freedom, to conduct its own business and to return Iraq to the international arena. Iraq is a country with a prominent place in history.

I support the vision of the Secretary-General, as outlined in his statement this morning, of the role that the United Nations and the Security Council have to play, as well as his appeal to the Security Council to regain and preserve its unity, because the settlement of the Iraq question cannot be fair or just without the effective participation of the United Nations. The United Nations has helped to achieve much progress in rebuilding State structures in Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste, not to mention its steps to transfer authority from the United Nations to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo. The establishment of authority and the two rounds of elections that took place there along with the independence of Timor-Leste, are among the United Nations success stories that must be recognized. However, much remains to be done to achieve further

success. That can be accomplished by means of coordination among all the international organizations and agencies concerned.

The results of recent elections in Sierra Leone and the assistance given to the Government to extend its control in the face of great difficulties, would not have been successful without the political will and the financial and human resources that were invested in the country. We feel satisfaction at the progress achieved in Afghanistan with respect to establishing a new constitution, the preparatory work for elections and the further progress in the implementation of the transitional political programme established at the Bonn conference. However, it is of prime importance that ownership of the constitutional and political process should be fully in the hands of the Afghan people. They themselves must freely take the decisions on political issues affecting the future of their country, as reflected in the Kabul declaration. On the other hand, maintaining those achievements depends on the ability to deal with similar challenges.

In conclusion, we must reiterate the need to respect the sovereignty of post-conflict States, to pay special attention to specific national conditions and to let the people participate in deciding their own destiny. It is also necessary for the United Nations to provide all forms of assistance to those countries. That will help maintain the sovereignty and political independence of the peoples of those countries and will provide for their future. In that respect, I would like to recall the regional role to which Ambassador Sir Jeremy Greenstock referred. Cooperation is necessary between the United Nations and regional organizations, on which a special Council meeting has already been held.

In that respect, we would like to underline the final communiqué issued by the countries neighbouring Iraq at the end of their meeting in Istanbul. The communiqué expressed the complete agreement among the countries neighbouring Iraq on the need to preserve the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and to enable the Iraqi people to elect their own legitimate Government according to their own free will and in complete freedom. The communiqué set out other important principles in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that the communiqué could provide a frame of reference for Security Council consultations when the Council deals with the question of post-conflict Iraq in the framework of cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations with respect to the importance of a regional role concerning Iraq and other countries.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): I would like to congratulate Mexico on its outstanding stewardship of the Security Council during the month of April and on convening this debate at such an appropriate time. The presence this morning of the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council is a wonderful and welcome acknowledgement that we need all the organs of the United Nations to become fully involved in post-conflict situations.

We are living through yet another defining moment for collective security. For more than 50 years, the United Nations has sought to accommodate the interests of the powerful States without jeopardizing the interests of the weaker States. In recent weeks, however, this delicate balance of State interests has been upset, exposing the inequality among sovereign States and leading to greater insecurity for all States. It is time for the entire United Nations membership to actively engage in responding to the imbalance in addressing matters of international peace and security. We believe that this debate should take place throughout the United Nations and that it must urgently address the question of how to reaffirm the rules-based multilateral system on which our collective security is premised.

The United Nations has a vital and fundamental role to play in post-conflict situations. It is the only organization that can bestow legitimacy and credibility on transitional arrangements. Over the years, the United Nations has developed norms and principles to ensure that comprehensive and multilateral solutions are found to address complex post-conflict situations. Among those principles are respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and recognition of the important role that regional organizations can play in assisting with peace-building efforts.

As the Secretary-General pointed out during the Security Council's interactive debate with regional organizations earlier this month,

> "Our Organization — for all its imperfections, real and perceived — has built up unique experience in dealing with a range of crises, by bringing humanitarian relief to millions in need, helping people rebuild their countries from the ruins of armed conflict, promoting human rights and the rule of law, and engaging in many other activities that have come to be seen as essential parts of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building". (*S/PV.4739, p. 4*)

South Africa believes that the Secretary-General and his staff, acting with an approved United Nations mandate, have the political credibility, skills and objectivity required for creating an enabling environment in which post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction can take place.

The Security Council has consistently taken the principled position that its responsibilities do not end with the termination of hostilities in any particular country. Council members have adopted an integrated view of security, which takes into account development and reconstruction issues. Furthermore, the Security Council has remained open to establishing a working relationship with the Economic and Social Council and international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

We believe that in doing these things the Security Council has contributed positively to peace-building and reconstruction efforts, and we hope that this will continue. The Security Council is central to the success of post-conflict stability and transition. However, we hope that when the Security Council considers the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations it will actively engage regional partners and incorporate their views, which may be critical for the post-conflict period.

It is South Africa's view that the United Nations is indeed collectively greater than the sum of its individual parts. There is no doubt that it has achieved great success; it has also had its share of failures. It is still the most appropriate instrument for ensuring that an enabling environment is created in places of conflict and suffering, an environment in which the people can shape their own future and determine their own destiny.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): Thank you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to convene this wrap-up meeting focusing on the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations. The theme you have chosen is both timely and appropriate — timely because of the increasing number of post-conflict situations which the international community has had to address since the end of the cold war, and appropriate because post-conflict situations demand as much, if not more, of the attention of the international community as the conflicts themselves.

There are a number of profoundly important tasks that must be undertaken in post-conflict situations to address humanitarian needs and to ensure peace and stability. These include responding to the immediate needs of refugees and internally displaced persons and promoting their resettlement; restoring internal security; disarming ex-combatants and collecting their firearms; removing landmines; restoring basic services, such as health care and primary education; reconstructing basic infrastructure; advancing new and effective governance; and promoting reconciliation among the groups that had been fighting each other. I could go on and on, but what is important to stress here is that the committed response of the international community to these issues is indispensable. Our failure to respond to them effectively and appropriately could very well result in the resumption of conflict.

Japan has for some time been emphasizing the concept of human security at the United Nations. As globalization proceeds, it is becoming increasingly difficult to protect the lives, livelihood and dignity of individuals solely within the traditional framework of State security. This is especially true in the case of a so-called failed State or bankrupt State. In post-conflict situations, the framework of the State has often been severely damaged and rendered dysfunctional. It is precisely in such a situation that appropriate human security measures are required. The Council may recall that, as a result of the initiative taken by my country during the 2000 Millennium Summit, the Commission on Human Security was established. The Commission, which is co-chaired by Mrs. Sadako Ogata and Professor Amartya Sen, will submit its final report to Secretary-General Annan, and will make it public, on 1 May. At a meeting organized by the International Peace Academy earlier this week to brief interested parties on the contents of that report, I learned that it emphasizes the task of protecting and empowering

people in post-conflict situations as one of the most important to be tackled from the standpoint of human security.

Allow me to make three brief comments on the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations. First, the United Nations system has broad experience in dealing with post-conflict situations-experience through which it has developed the capacity to respond to the specific needs of each post-conflict situation and thereby to contribute to the consolidation of peace. But this does not, of course, mean that the United Nations is not confronted with serious challenges. For example, in the United Nations system those responsible for humanitarian assistance and those in charge of reconstruction and development activities belong to separate bodies. As a result, the coordination of their tasks has not always been adequate. Indeed, we have witnessed a number of cases in which gaps emerged between the provision of humanitarian assistance and the provision of reconstruction and development assistance. We must realize that for people in post-conflict situations, both kinds of assistance are indispensable. As far as they are concerned, there is no reason why those two types of assistance should be planned and carried out according to separate policies and schedules. Japan believes that it is crucial for the United Nations to consider how to implement the seamless and coherent delivery of assistance, from the humanitarian stage to the reconstruction and development stage.

Secondly, the United Nations has an important responsibility in maintaining the international community's interest in and commitment to a post-conflict situation until peace has been consolidated and the situation is stable. It might be inevitable for the attention of the international community to turn to a conflict which has broken out recently and in a different area. However, once the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, undertakes to address the problems of a post-conflict situation, it must continue to make a steady effort to secure the cooperation and interest of the international community until peace has been fully and irreversibly restored.

Thirdly, the United Nations, made up of 191 Member States, is the only genuine universal Organization in the world today. Once it makes a decision to become actively involved in a post-conflict situation, therefore, that decision will be regarded as reflecting the will of the international community as a whole. Such a decision, and the consequent presence of the United Nations in a post-conflict situation, can be very effective in promoting reconciliation between the parties to the erstwhile conflict and in providing them with a sound basis on which to work together for nation-building. The United Nations is also in a position to provide those Member States that wish to extend assistance in a post-conflict situation with the legitimacy to do so. We should not forget that in countries emerging from conflict — from Afghanistan to Sierra Leone, from Timor-Leste to Kosovo — as well as in countries like Iraq, which is emerging from the shadow of a cruel dictator, international assistance would be much enhanced through the active involvement of the United Nations.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting. I welcome the participation of the Secretary-General and of the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in today's discussion, and I thank them for their important statements.

Post-conflict situations involve more than national reconciliation, humanitarian assistance, the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants and national reconstruction. They also involve relations with neighbouring countries and the stabilization of the situation in the regions concerned. Whether the United Nations can play its role in post-conflict situations will depend mainly on the political will of the parties to the conflict and on their firm commitment to peace agreements. Those are the conditions required for the United Nations to play its role. The international community's steadfast support, both politically and in terms of resources, is an important guarantee of the maintenance of stability and the promotion of economic development after conflicts. That is especially true for economically underdeveloped regions, Africa in particular.

Furthermore, the United Nations should promptly formulate a comprehensive strategy to strengthen its coordination and cooperation with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations; only thus can we achieve the desired results. It must also be pointed out that conflict situations around the world vary. One-size-fits-all approaches can hardly be effective; rather, the United Nations should take a tailored approach by taking into full consideration the particularities of the issues involved and devoting

attention to the views of the countries concerned and of the parties to conflicts.

At present, the international community is watching closely the post-conflict arrangements for and rebuilding of Iraq, particularly the way in which the United Nations will play its role. Like many other countries, we believe that, because the Security Council adopted a series of resolutions on weapons inspections, sanctions and the oil-for-food programme with regard to Iraq, the management of those issues in post-conflict Iraq will require the Council's participation and decisions. The participation of the United Nations in the post-conflict management and rebuilding of Iraq will enable us to mobilize the international community to provide the various forms of support and cooperation so essential for Iraq, which requires rebuilding in every area.

China welcomes any programme that is in the Iraqi people's interests and promotes the restoration of peace and stability in Iraq and the region as a whole. We are confident that, with flexibility, realism and a constructive approach, we shall be able to find common ground and to realize that the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, not only should but also can play their roles.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): Given that the representative of Greece made a statement earlier on behalf of the European Union with which my country — as a country associated with the European Union — aligns itself, my comments will be very brief, as you wished, Mr. President.

I begin by welcoming the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council. Their presence points to the need to better coordinate the action of the Security Council with that of the Organization's other principal organs, given that the management of post-conflict situations requires an integrated approach by the whole United Nations system, in the light of the growing complexity of the situations that we face.

Mr. President, you asked that our comments focus on four particular cases of post-conflict situations that have been on the Council's agenda for some time — Afghanistan, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste — and I believe you were right. Those are four successes in terms of the management of post-conflict situations, and I believe that the time is right to look for the reasons for that success, without denying the existence of problems and failures here and there. But I believe that we all agree: those are four successes.

I am very grateful to the Secretary-General for his statement, not merely because of his in-depth analysis of post-conflict situations and the role of the United Nations, but also because of the frankness and clarity of his comments. It is clear that our discussion today is taking place in the context of the situation in Iraq and the possible United Nations role in managing that post-conflict situation. The situation in Iraq is a part of the backdrop to today's discussion, and the Secretary-General was right to speak of it.

I believe that the Security Council's task consists of determining the extent to which its action in Iraq can benefit from lessons that we draw from these four cases to which I just referred. What are the reasons for the relative — even categorical — success of the United Nations in those four situations, despite their dissimilarities, as the Secretary-General said?

First of all, it is because the United Nations is seen by the peoples concerned and by the international community as a principal source of legitimacy and justice. That is a fundamental fact that we cannot ignore. At the same time, if one looks closely at Afghanistan, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste, it is clear that the very nature of United Nations action in those four situations strengthens the credibility of the Organization to some extent. And I should like to draw particular attention to United Nations activities on behalf of democratic institutions and human rights in those four cases and elsewhere. I thank in particular the President of the General Assembly for having mentioned that dimension of United Nations actions. I believe that Mr. Kavan, a veteran champion of human rights, is well placed to speak about it.

The importance that the United Nations attaches to this aspect of its activities cannot be exaggerated. I believe that one of the common points that emerges from United Nations action is knowing how to manage the oppressive and very negative legacy of post-conflict situations arising from the recent past of these countries, which very often have been the site of major, long-term human rights violations. I believe that the United Nations has taken the position of categorically rejecting the culture of impunity. In order that those societies may be able to build their futures and their institutions on sound foundations, the desire for

stability and calm should not hinder the quest for the truth.

The fact that the Security Council and the United Nations in general have adapted to the facts on the ground is of course another very important reason for the Organization's success in these situations. Clearly, these are four different situations; but the Security Council has tailored the mandates of the peacekeeping operations in each of these cases in such a way as to ensure that they take into account major stakeholders in the field. Cooperation with regional actors is therefore crucial. In that regard, I wish to refer to the case of Kosovo, in which cooperation with such organizations as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has thus far been crucial to the success of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

Being faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and being flexible and realistic are thus two aspects of that success. Once again, I completely agree with the Secretary-General that these principles should guide us as we make choices with regard to the situation in Iraq.

I would like to thank the President once again for having chosen this theme for our discussion today, which I believe will permit a frank and interactive debate.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): First of all, I would like to compliment you, Mr. President, for convening this important wrap-up meeting.

There is no disagreement that the United Nations has an important responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In upholding that responsibility, the United Nations is equipped under the Charter with a wide variety of means — including the pacific settlement of disputes, peacemaking and peacekeeping — to address potential or actual conflict situations. At times, the responsibility of the United Nations goes even beyond traditional peacemaking and peacekeeping to ensuring that the peace that emerges at the end of a conflict is sustained and not reversed.

In many conflict situations, in recent times especially, the challenge has been not only to secure peace, but also to make it endure. It is for that reason that the United Nations has placed great emphasis on peace-building in post-conflict situations, both in terms of carrying the peace process forward to its logical conclusion and of ensuring the institutional and socio-economic reconstruction of war-torn countries. Many of the more active issues currently on the Council's agenda have strong post-conflict elements tied to the peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts already in place, especially in Timor-Leste, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan.

One prime example showing the importance of post-conflict peace-building is Afghanistan, where winning the peace still remains a significant challenge for the United Nations, and especially for the Security Council. Pakistan, as an immediate neighbour of Afghanistan, attaches the utmost importance to the restoration of peace and stability in that country. To succeed in Afghanistan, the United Nations not only has to ensure that the peace process initiated at Bonn reaches a successful culmination; it must also remain engaged in the country's socio-economic reconstruction and recovery in the short, medium and long term. At the same time, the issue of security, which underpins both processes, needs to be addressed. Unless all three of those issues are simultaneously and comprehensively addressed, and until the international community fulfils its obligations in that regard, peace in Afghanistan will remain elusive.

The current situation in Iraq presents yet a different challenge. Pakistan has consistently advocated an approach inspired by the need to take immediate measures for the security, rehabilitation and reconstruction of Iraq and its people. After years of war, death and destruction, the international community must assist in healing the wounds of the Iraqi people and in pushing the process of peace-building forward. The international community's engagement through the United Nations will be the best guarantee for the observance of Iraqi rights and for credible reconstruction and durable stability. That would enhance the confidence of the international community in the international system that was established to take care of those in need and distress.

Post-conflict peace-building has also become an important element in ongoing United Nations peacekeeping missions in zones of intra-State conflict. Pakistan is participating in several such missions. In those missions, as well as in similar past peacekeeping operations, Pakistani troops have made their contribution to help local communities emerge from the trauma of conflict. For example, in Sierra Leone the Pakistani contingent has repaired places of worship, schools, hospitals and roads. It has also built sports and

community centres and recreational facilities and extended medical facilities. These are some of the steps that our peacekeepers, and no doubt others as well, have taken within their own means as part of United Nations peacekeeping operations to help restore normalcy to communities torn apart by conflict. The healing of society is part and parcel of restoring and sustaining peace in such cases.

The question is often raised of where the involvement of the United Nations in a post-conflict situation begins and where it must end. In the past, we have seen that the premature withdrawal of the United Nations from a conflict zone has led to disastrous consequences. The United Nations and its Member States must therefore have both the political and the financial will to sustain a peace effort once it has started, regardless of whether it is a case of a post-conflict situation or whether it is in the context of conflict prevention. Peace simply cannot be built without the active and sustained effort of the United Nations. The United Nations therefore has an obligation to address each dispute or conflict situation without any selectivity. Once the process of peacemaking begins it needs to be taken to its logical conclusion.

A classic example of that in our own region is the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. This is both a post-conflict situation over which three wars have been fought and a situation that, if not addressed, could lead to another conflict with potentially horrendous consequences. It is the obligation of the United Nations to ensure the establishment of peace in the region by enabling the people of Jammu and Kashmir to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. I will conclude by citing an old quotation: "Any peace built on the compromise of principles is no peace at all."

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Georgia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Adamia (Georgia): I would like to express my delegation's gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting of the Security Council, as it provides for broad participation of the States from the regional groups in the discussion of this issue that is important for the entire international community.

The experience of the United Nations itself is testimony that in most cases the Organization's role in post-conflict situations is shaped and structured by the scope and nature of its involvement at each stage of conflict resolution. I would go further to state that the extent of involvement in conflict resolution is to be set as a benchmark, against which the success or failure of the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations is measured. It is worthwhile to note that in the United Nations Charter action by the United Nations is correlative to promptness and effectiveness.

Where such conditions are not present, where the United Nations resolutions are dishonoured by inaction due to lack of will or sometimes by narrowly defined self-interest, there are always high human, political and security costs to be paid. This compelling reason makes intervention by a State or group of States inevitable in order to maintain international peace and security, as was the case in Iraq. I would add that these States have sound moral, political and even legal grounds for doing so.

This is the main lesson the international community has learned, I hope, in Iraq but has not yet learned in the process of conflict resolution in a region of my country — Abkhazia. Thus the greatest challenge posed to the United Nations is the old one: how to work out and implement an effective modus operandi in both conflict resolution and post-conflict situations.

The United Nations has an important role to play here, given its unique expertise and experience in undertaking a wide range of peace-building tasks. The United Nations is particularly well placed for this role, as it is able to forge the cooperation across institutional boundaries and between organizations and States that is required for finding durable solutions to complex situations.

We are convinced that the United Nations must continue sustained peace-building efforts in Afghanistan and Sierra Leone, in particular to address pressing issues of security and stability through establishing and increasing the capacity of the local army and police forces. Likewise, the reconstruction of Iraq requires the United Nations to play a vital role through utilizing its resources and expertise in achieving that goal.

In our view the United Nations could greatly benefit if it could draft ready-to-use models from its

experience of involvement in post-conflict situations, to use in mapping out approaches in the future.

The Security Council bears primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, including in post-conflict situations. Thus it is important that the Council commit itself to ensuring that its mandates are best tailored to meet the needs of the specific post-conflict situations and are fully implemented.

The Security Council's handling of Iraq's post-war reconstruction could serve as a litmus test of our commitments. The attempt to manipulate the technicalities of previously adopted resolutions and thus prevent the Council from lifting sanctions in order to pave the way for launching the reconstruction process in Iraq is unacceptable and should be avoided.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): The question of the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations is gaining increasing importance in light of the variables in international conflicts. This has put major responsibility on the shoulders of the international community, and we must all have the political will to address it.

The role of the United Nations in peace-building and peace maintenance in different phases of conflict resolution is established and is gaining importance, particularly in light of the United Nations successes in Angola and Mozambique and its proven capabilities in dealing with delicate and difficult situations in Kosovo, Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone. However, this role has varied in the case of each conflict.

The United Nations working method has differed according to the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council. Experience in the field has shown that the Organization has succeeded to a great extent in developing its expert capabilities in planning, implementation and commanding peacekeeping missions in accordance with differing mandates, which vary in size and nature.

The United Nations has succeeded tangibly in building participation and communication bridges with regional powers and organizations in the area of the conflict. Although myriad parties have recognized that the experience of the United Nations in many conflict areas was positive, we must not disregard the fact that the Organization continues to face many challenges to its efforts. They include the fact that some donor States have not honoured their pledges and commitments to peace-building in post-conflict States.

These challenges are also reflected in the lack of coordination between the pace of the United Nations achievements in the areas of security and politics and its pace in building the economic and social infrastructures in the countries affected, in particular the pace of implementing programmes or building institutional capacities such as the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in civil society, de-mining and trying war crimes.

There is no doubt that peace cannot be divided — it is indivisible — and that the security and political aspects of peace, despite their absolute importance, are not adequate for a comprehensive framework for building peace. A healthy economic and social climate is also necessary to develop and perpetuate that peace.

In the framework of the United Nations concentration on post-conflict situations, surely the question of Iraq, with all its developments since the Security Council adopted resolution 1441 (2002) and even before that, has constituted and still constitutes a major challenge to the concept of the effectiveness of the contemporary United Nations, a challenge that threatens to destroy the overriding principles and norms of the United Nations Charter. Furthermore, the challenges of the future of post-war Iraq are no less important and serious than those that international collective efforts faced during the war itself.

The positions of the Security Council during the last month have shown a reticence on the part of the international community to deal with post-war Iraq. The Council did not fail, in dealing with the issue of Iraq and in the context of resolution 1472 (2003), in the preamble, to refer to the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to the responsibility of the Occupying Power in ensuring all the needs of the population. Whether the occupied territory had the resources to meet these needs is an issue to which Egypt attaches great importance.

Egypt warned of the risks of a lopsided war, although no one heeded our warnings and advice. The destructive war has come to pass nonetheless. Today,

we urge that certain principled considerations be taken into account in order to avert further peril befalling the Middle East. These considerations are as follows:

First, the two coalition forces that control Iraq must provide for the security and stability of that country as soon as possible and protect the lives and dignity of its citizens. Secondly, the international community should intensify its efforts to create without delay an atmosphere conducive to establishing a legitimate Government, to be chosen by all factions of the Iraqi people. Thirdly, the occupation must end and the foreign forces withdraw as soon as possible in order to preserve the unity, security and safety of the Iraqi people and its country. Fourthly, the United Nations should assume its essential role in the reconstruction of Iraq and the restoration of security and legitimacy there, in consideration of the implications of the situation for the credibility of the Organization and its Charter and for the concomitant role of the regional organizations.

One final issue that we feel should be addressed concerns the fact that, although we are considering and assessing the development and strengthening of the United Nations role in post-conflict situations, we must not allow ourselves to forget that the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, must shoulder their principal responsibility for saving humanity from the scourge of such wars before they begin or are launched and for protecting peoples from the destruction of their infrastructures, the plundering of their resources and the loss of their cultural and historical heritages. Regrettably, the issue of Iraq is a case in point in this context.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by thanking you, Sir, for convening this meeting on a topic to which we attach great importance.

In our view, the United Nations key role in the maintenance of peace makes it an essential player in the post-conflict period. The phase following the end of hostilities is crucial. If a genuine attempt is to be made to resolve the problem, reforms must be undertaken allowing the countries involved to be economically, politically and socially viable. Democratic institutions must be established and consolidated, a police force created and the rule of law strengthened, while a sustainable and equitable economy and an effective and responsible administration must be fostered. Moreover, programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants must be established, arms trafficking and the spread of small arms stopped, refugees and internally displaced persons returned home, and human rights promoted. All of this is necessary to the foundation of a country that can develop freely, democratically and in peace.

Some thoughts about United Nations participation in post-conflict peace-building situations lead us to certain conclusions. First, experience teaches us that the early involvement of the United Nations is required. It is worth considering the United Nations mandate at the beginning of the process in order to define a consistent and strategic position for the Organization that can foresee the difficulties to be encountered. Logically, such involvement must in due course be accompanied by the necessary material and human resources without which a mission will have a hard time succeeding. This aspect is essential. The resources allocated to peacekeeping operations often totally and abruptly vanish when a conflict ends, with disastrous consequences. In this regard, in order to establish the most coherent and complete strategy possible, it is vital to promote contacts between the Security Council and the specialized agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Secondly, it is essential to ensure the flexibility of modalities for action, given the need to adapt to a broad diversity of situations. There is no uniform structure that can be universally applied to United Nations missions. In peace-building missions as such, or in peacekeeping operations with peace-building functions — such as the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone or the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor — the concrete requirements of each situation must act to define the Organization's action. At the same time, flexibility is vital to adapting the mandate of a mission to the changing circumstances of the process. Flexibility is also necessary to establishing structures that will allow for cooperation with regional organizations.

Thirdly and lastly, we deem the evolving nature of United Nations participation throughout the post-conflict period to be indispensable. The Organization should be capable of taking on new tasks as the

situation requires, while an exit strategy should be defined that will allow the gradual reduction and ultimate elimination of the United Nations presence, leaving outstanding tasks in the hands of national authorities. In this regard, we consider it very useful to minimize the contribution of international personnel, while building the capacities of local personnel, as has been done in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

The combination of these three factors — early involvement, flexibility and evolving participation — is essential if we wish the United Nations to play its due role in the context of post-conflict periods, which is critical if we are to avoid a return to confrontation.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank the Mexican delegation for organizing today's meeting, which I believe to be very useful and timely. We have been delighted to welcome the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council. They have made important contributions to our discussion.

As I am honoured to speak rather late in this discussion, I will not reiterate some very relevant points raised and comments made on the details of the United Nations experience in this very important area. I am reluctant to outline general principles because I can only echo, less eloquently, the Secretary-General's outstanding opening statement to this meeting. The priorities he outlined and what he said about Iraq deserve our full attention, and I endorse his remarks.

At this stage in our discussion, I would like to make a few comments. First, on the evolution over time of the Council's work, I note that the Council's increasing involvement in recent years in the management of conflicts has been accompanied by a double awareness: of both the pre-conflict and post-conflict situations.

In pre-conflict situations, our Organization has gradually become convinced by the facts on the ground that it is necessary to work on conflict prevention. I recall that the Council's debate on conflict prevention started some 10 years ago, and I can observe today that much progress has been made in this area. First, there is the ongoing concern — even if it needs to be further developed — to identify the early warning signs, possible causes and triggers of potential conflicts so that we can try to intervene in time. Secondly, I observe a concern to take measures to prevent as far as possible conflicts from breaking out. I think that the Organization has made a great effort in recent years in that respect, as attested to by the dispatch of Permanent Representatives, the missions of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and Council missions to the field, as well as the various early warning mechanisms that have been put in place.

What I find interesting is that in recent years there has been a growing awareness, as reflected in today's discussion, of what needs to be done at the post-conflict stage. At that stage, too, the effective management of situations teaches us two things. First, most often, countries emerging from conflict are left exhausted by the experience. Sometimes there is real potential, but economic, social, political and humanitarian conditions are deeply affected by the crisis. More often than not, we have to deal with societies that have been traumatized. In those situations, not to establish a robust post-conflict policy would mean a failure to react in the face of the risk of an inevitable relapse, new chaos and new injustice, and hence in the face of the renewal or exacerbation of the conflict that has just been resolved. In other words, we risk facing a renewal of conflict unless we have a good post-conflict policy in place. We have collectively had that kind of experience. We have had situations of real success, but we must acknowledge that they have had certain limitations. We have seen that — and this has been said repeatedly today, including by you, Mr. President — in Sierra Leone, in Kosovo, to a certain extent in Bosnia, in Timor-Leste and, of course, in Afghanistan, where Mr. Brahimi has played a historic role, as well as in other cases.

I believe that the question before us is very simple: what lessons can we draw for the future? I note three. The first lesson is that, despite everything, the overall record of the United Nations in managing post-conflict situations is in fact rather outstanding. Of course, it always tempting to emphasize the defects and shortcomings of the interventions by international institutions. But, if we stand back and look, the results of what we have accomplished together in situations as varied as those of Timor-Leste, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Kosovo are impressive. Of course, we need to improve our methods by taking into account the lessons learned. But we must also be aware of the astonishing — and, as I have just said, relatively

recent — success story of United Nations post-conflict management.

The second lesson that I draw is that what the various situations I have mentioned have in common is that the key to success lies in the comprehensive nature of the approach adopted, something seen to a different degree in each case. What ensured success was the coordination, within one overall strategy, of the security, political, economic and social dimensions. The humanitarian aspect in a way falls within a different framework, but it too benefits from a coherent approach in the other areas.

The third lesson is that there is no fixed model that can be applied to all post-conflict situations. That point was very well made by the Secretary-General in his introductory statement. We know that each situation requires a comprehensive approach. But we also know that each situation requires a specific approach. So, we must be careful in each case to implement the elements that made other United Nations interventions successful, adapting those elements in a precise and thoughtful way to the specifics of a given situation.

I think those are some lessons that we can take from our experience. Based on them, I would like to draw three conclusions, given the challenges that now lie ahead of us.

First, what the United Nations, representing the international community, can contribute in a post-conflict situation, is, first, the ability to establish the legitimacy that is essential to restoring the social fabric of a country whose structure has been damaged by conflict and, secondly, to ensure that country's reintegration into the regional and international community.

Secondly, in a post-conflict situation, the United Nations can also contribute expertise that is absolutely unique given the diversity of the tasks performed by the United Nations and its agencies and given the experience that has been accumulated in theatres as varied as they are complex.

The third conclusion is that in post-conflict situations the United Nations, finally, is able to draw in donor countries and international financial institutions.

I think that it is those various elements that the heads of State and Government of the European Union had in mind when they adopted the presidency's statement on Iraq in Athens on 16 April. That declaration sets out principles on a number of aspects of the question of Iraq. It says in particular, that

> "The United Nations must play a central role including in the process leading towards self-government for the Iraqi people, utilizing its unique capacity and experience in post-conflict nation building".

Mr. Williamson (United States of America): Mr. President, I want to thank you for thank you for convening this Security Council wrap-up meeting on post-conflict situations, which is a good way to continue and elaborate on the discussion we have had in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations several weeks ago. I thank the Secretary-General for his interesting remarks.

The Brahimi reforms are still not fully implemented. If this discussion can help to push some of those proposals forward, then this will have been a very useful Security Council session. The Brahimi reforms are a good place to start the discussion because they drew on the long and varied experience of the United Nations in various peacekeeping efforts over the years. For obvious reasons, that exercise has been careful not to infringe on the role of the Security Council in making political decisions.

In the nearly 58 years since the United Nations Charter was signed, there have been, by our count, 202 armed conflicts involving 114 nations. More than 27 million people have been killed in those conflicts. The United Nations has played a post-conflict role in only a small number of those conflicts and has met with varying degrees of success. One need examine only a few of those conflicts to understand that the United Nations role varies significantly from one post-conflict environment to the next.

Mr. President, in your useful non-paper circulated last Thursday, you suggested that we look at the United Nations role in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone. Before considering the United Nations role subsequent to those conflicts, I would like to make a point about the conflicts themselves. My delegation agrees with Secretary-General Annan that every conflict is unique.

I would add, as a corollary to that axiom, that the role of the United Nations and other international and regional organizations also varies from case to case. If we compare the baseline conditions in Afghanistan —

a nation of 25 million people with a wide range of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds — with those in Timor-Leste — a nation of less than 1 million people without significant tribal or ethnic divisions — we quickly understand why the conflict in Afghanistan was very different from that in Timor-Leste and why the post-conflict structures that the United Nations established were also distinct.

These differences point to the need for the United Nations to tailor its involvement on a case-by-case basis. Former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld once said that in conflict situations the United Nations must go to a tailor for the tailor-made suit needed for the occasion. This flexibility has been institutionalized in the Brahimi reform process. It is not a weakness, but rather a strength of the dynamic nature of the United Nations itself, which encompasses and is affected by the national interests of United Nations Members.

By virtue of having been involved in more than 60 conflicts, the United Nations can rely on an ever-growing number of post-conflict experiences, as well as lessons learned. This cumulative experience provides a toolbox, as it were, of solutions that can be brought to bear in the face of specific problems.

Part of our flexibility is understanding what the United Nations can and cannot do. We neither strengthen the United Nations or the Security Council nor help bring peace to a conflict by over-promising, raising unrealistic expectations or over-extending the capacity of the United Nations to deliver on the ground.

My delegation takes away several lessons from the United Nations role in Sierra Leone and other post-conflict situations in Africa. One lesson, for example, is the need to find a mechanism for donor group coordination and follow-up and for the reintegration element of any disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme undertaken as part of a post-conflict peace process. Secondly, there is a need for the effective coordination of humanitarian assistance among peacekeeping operations, international aid agencies and humanitarian groups as a situation moves from peacekeeping to post-conflict reconstruction and renewal. The United Nations is uniquely qualified to provide such coordination in a post-conflict environment, taking policy guidance from the Security Council or the lead security force on the ground — in the case of Sierra Leone, the British military, which provided umbrella security in the immediate post-conflict environment.

Sierra Leone also offers insight with regard to the role of the United Nations in coordinating key humanitarian issues in a post-conflict environment. How the United Nations and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) responded to the humanitarian needs of refugees and internally displaced persons in Sierra Leone offers valuable lessons. In the case of UNAMSIL, its assistance was focused, responsive and limited to its mandate. That is the way it should be. The primary task of a peacekeeping mission is to support a political process, even in the post-conflict period. The Council acted to authorize UNAMSIL to participate in the international humanitarian response in Sierra Leone only after a clear explanation of the role UNAMSIL would play and after it became clear that UNAMSIL had unique capabilities that could not be duplicated by any other organization.

Another lesson from the humanitarian side of the ledger is that of the importance of disseminating explicit guidelines on the role of the various United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. It is also important to have clear mechanisms in place to address concerns about overlapping mandates between the activities of non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies. We saw the benefit of such guidelines in the agreement between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNAMSIL on the use of peacekeeping operation resources to move refugees.

In the area of transitional justice, which is critical to post-conflict societies' movement to peaceful, sustainable societies, Sierra Leone is providing a very important example. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is carrying out interviews, allowing the truth to be told. The Special Court has now handed down its first indictments against those who allegedly committed the worst crimes against humanity. If those two institutions of transitional justice are successful, there will be important lessons for the Security Council in moving forward in the critical area of transitional justice.

With regard to Timor-Leste, a nation small in territory and modest in population, Australia was the indispensable lead nation in moving the country from conflict to peace and independence. The United

Nations played the central role in organizing elections, and the donor community, working with the United Nations, was generous. In order to build a sustainable society in Timor-Leste it was necessary to build the institutions of civil society, from constructing Government buildings to constructing schools, from training teachers to building a properly trained police force with adequate numbers. The central role of the United Nations has been extremely important in all phases of this post-conflict situation. The success of the people Timor-Leste, aided by the United Nations and the donor community, is significant and very promising.

In Kosovo, after the North Atlantic Treaty Organization employed armed force to end the genocide of Albanian Kosovars, the United Nations played a major role in the post-conflict society, with invaluable assistance from the European Union and the larger donor community. The Security Council met on Kosovo just a few days ago. The United Nations has helped that post-conflict situation. The goal of a stable, multi-ethnic Kosovo is a worthy and important one. As laid out in the Secretary-General's most recent report on Kosovo, and as discussed around this table, major challenges in Kosovo remain. Devolution, tempered by the realities on the ground, must continue. The development of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government must progress. The human rights of all ethnic groups, including their freedom of movement, must be achieved. In Kosovo the work is not done. But the United States is confident that the United Nations mission in Kosovo will be successful. The Security Council's continued attention and involvement in post-conflict Kosovo, however, will be required.

In Afghanistan, the coalition forces ended the reign of the Taliban. Afghanistan had become not a State that sponsored terrorists, but a Government that was held up by terrorists. Those days are over. The United Nations has been the key coordinator as different nations have taken the lead in important areas to reconstruct post-conflict Afghanistan — Italy in the judicial area, the United Kingdom in illicit drug eradication, Germany in police training, Japan in DDR, and the United States in training the Afghan National Army, with the support and help of the French. This is a very different model from Kosovo and, thanks to the leadership of Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the great talent and skill of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Brahimi, the post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan is on a clear path to success — politically, in terms of reconstruction and in other areas.

Given that some of my colleagues have raised the topic of Iraq, I would like to reiterate some of the key principles of United States policy on that issue. Saddam Hussain's weapons of mass destruction no longer threaten international peace and security. The coalition has liberated the Iraqi people from the brutal tyranny of Saddam Hussain's regime. The days of thousands of unaccounted-for disappearances in Iraq are over. The days of torture are behind the Iraqi people. The days of using chemical weapons against Iraqi Kurds and of genocide against Iraqi Shiites in the south are over. The days of human rights travesty and abuse are over.

The coalition has liberated the Iraqi people from a brutal tyranny. The coalition is working on the ground to ensure that the Iraqi people receive supplies of the essentials of daily life, including food, water and medical supplies, until Iraq's return to being a self-sustaining member of the global community.

The United Nations can play a vital role in post-conflict Iraq. Fortunately, predictions of a humanitarian catastrophe, even predictions of a humanitarian crisis, have proved inaccurate. The coalition also is working with the people of Iraq to facilitate their recovery. We are committed to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, as well as to an Iraq free of weapons of mass destruction, living in peace with its neighbours.

The coalition will not remain in Iraq longer than required. An Iraqi Government chosen by the Iraqi people and serving the Iraqi people is the goal of the United States and of its partners in the coalition.

I would like to conclude my remarks with one other point that I often see omitted in public debate: the will of the governed. We must not lose sight of the fact that the wants and needs of the people in a post-conflict environment are best defined by those people. As the international community reaches out to help a population in need, one of its first tasks must be to seek to provide that population with a voice, a voice with which to articulate their own desires regarding what comes next. Helping the people find their voice is especially important in cases where a new government model is being instituted, as is the case in all of the models that have been cited today in your non-paper,

Mr. President, and in the discussion which we have had.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia): Mr. President, it is my pleasure to have the opportunity to participate in this wrap-up session under your presidency and to contribute to the discussion on the subject of the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations. The discussion of this very important subject in the Council under the auspices of Mexico is testimony to its high sense of responsibility and purpose, for which we are most appreciative.

The first business of the United Nations remains the business of peace. When there is conflict, the objective is always the same: to achieve peace as soon as possible, with a minimum of loss of life and destruction. In a post-conflict scenario, the maintenance of peace and security, as an important value in itself but also as a precondition for development, is — and ought to be — of the greatest concern to Member States and to my delegation.

In the view of my delegation, the first order of priority in a post-conflict situation is to respond to the humanitarian needs of the people. The need for food, water, medical care, security and housing cannot wait until tomorrow or be delayed because of long speeches. As the pre-eminent human organization, we must respond to post-conflict humanitarian needs in a timely, organized fashion. This must be the most basic, minimum standard acceptable, and such a response must be provided without debate or delay.

Of the diverse skills available to the international community at the United Nations, those relating to humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping must be among those ranked highest, given the volume of crises to which the Organization has had to respond in the last half-century. In our view, there can never be an overabundance of these skills, capacities or institutional memory. The United Nations should continue to develop and maintain them, in order to have them available and tuned for deployment wherever and whenever required.

My delegation recognizes that every conflict, and therefore every post-conflict scenario, is different. The capacity of the United Nations to learn from every experience and to be prepared for every conceivable scenario by studying and internalizing the lessons of the past is one of our greatest strengths as an Organization, and we must take advantage of it.

In the response to the immediate humanitarian demands of every conflict are sown the seeds of conflict resolution and peace-building, and the United Nations must always be careful to maintain consistency in the application and implementation of mandates. One of the most critical contributions of the Organization is to enter a conflict, or its aftermath as a committed — but not controversial — arbiter. It is of the utmost importance that the United Nations, in every situation, be seen as a genuine friend and helper, not as an external body with a suspect motive. The agenda of the United Nations must never differ from what is set out in the Charter of the Organization, or in the resolutions informed by it.

Experience teaches us that the challenge of political settlement often involve significant United Nations involvement, not only to create the conditions for nationals and groups to sit together to sort out their differences, but often to be a part of the negotiations and of the defining of new structures and directions. Again, the ability of the United Nations to be prepared for these events and to work with the people fairly, authoritatively and impartially is one of our greatest strengths, and it must be jealously guarded and strengthened. If the people in conflict do not see the United Nations as strong, united and impartial, they cannot rely on it to supervise or be part of any negotiations.

I have spoken of the need for the United Nations always to be prepared, relying on experience, for potential post-conflict challenges. At the same time, all situations are different, and unintended mistakes are possible, either in terms of specific mandates or of their implementation. My delegation hopes that, as the Security Council undertakes the periodic creation, modification and review of mandates relating to post-conflict situations, it will always bear in mind the subtle and not-so-subtle differences in conflict situations, and the political and cultural contexts in which they are taking place. Unless we are conscious of these issues and nuances, it may not be possible to arrive at the kinds of decisions necessary to achieve success, or to prevent situations from sliding back into further conflict.

Finally, in every post-conflict situation, it is crucial for the United Nations to support development programmes and the equal access of all parties to the benefits of such programmes. Given the well-established relationship between peace and development, this approach must be faithfully upheld as a standard, in order that the basis of further conflicts in the future might be discouraged.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this very interesting meeting, and to congratulate you on the way in which you have conducted the business of the Council over the past 30 days.

(*spoke in English*)

The United Nations has been effective and even indispensable in post-conflict developments in Mozambique, Guatemala, Afghanistan, the Balkans and many other places. It has guided and monitored political change, including democracy and governance, in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor. It has kept women's issues and interests on the agenda of change, when they risked being set aside for a later that would never come, in places such as Afghanistan, Kosovo and East Timor. It has protected children in conflict and in post-conflict stress, as United States Fund for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reminded us recently.

The United Nations has brought justice to the repressed through the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda and in the emerging Sierra Leone court. In each case, the role and the centrality of the United Nations has been different. As Secretary-General Annan said this morning, every conflict is different, every post-conflict situation is different, and each model of intervention by the international community will be different.

In Iraq, we have an immediate post-conflict humanitarian and reconstruction challenge before us. It is in everyone's interests, especially in the interests of the Iraqi people, to ensure that Iraq becomes an economically functional, politically stable and entirely self-governing State, respectful of the rule of law, of democratic principles and of international norms.

The coalition nations currently controlling Iraqi territory have distinct responsibilities as occupying Powers to maintain public order and safety, protect civilians and provide essential services. The wider international community — especially the United Nations and the international financial institutions — also has an indispensable role to play.

While systems are in place for humanitarian assistance, a framework is needed to facilitate greater engagement and support in the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq. The United Nations has extensive expertise that can and should be brought to bear under these circumstances. The United Nations and its agencies have been heavily involved in Iraq since the first Gulf war and have an in-depth understanding of the circumstances that Iraq faces and of the challenges that it will have to surmount. The United Nations is fully engaged through its agencies and resources on the ground, providing much-needed humanitarian assistance. The United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme — those institutions know Iraq. We need to build on the strength of their engagement and to determine how best we can make further use of their experience and their expertise.

In Iraq, as in all post-conflict situations, our common overarching goals must be to meet the needs of the people and to support them in their course towards stability, recovery and reconstruction. To those ends, our approach needs to be flexible and pragmatic. Canada will put the interests of the Iraqi people at the heart of its decision-making. Canada has allocated approximately $75 million to humanitarian relief and reconstruction, of which about $45 million has already been spent. Prime Minister Chrétien announced yesterday that Canada will expand the role of its three transport aircraft in the region to support immediate humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. Canada is also prepared to make police, corrections and legal officers available to provide assistance and advice on governance and security sector reform, and we are also prepared to draw on select units of Canada's Disaster Assistance Response Team if that is needed.

We would be remiss if we did not make two further points. The first point is something that we could draw from Kosovo: do not draw lessons learned too early; wait for the dust to settle. And secondly, do not forget the crises in Africa. Poverty, HIV/AIDS and drought are killing people there, far from the eyes of

the media. The people there need us as urgently today as they did on 19 March: the war in Iraq has made them no less vulnerable. Let us make sure that it makes them no more vulnerable.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): Thank you, Sir, for convening this wrap-up meeting, which comes at an appropriate time and deals with a very important matter. With it, you are concluding a presidency whose challenges you have mastered with excellence and professionalism, and we should like to thank you for that.

We welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at the beginning of this discussion and of the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and we welcome their important statements. My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made earlier by Greece on behalf of the European Union.

The theme of today's meeting could not be more relevant. Since the end of the cold war, United Nations peace operations have become increasingly complex. Today, they comprise not only traditional peacekeeping but also a vast array of measures aimed at rebuilding countries — sometimes a whole region — affected by violent conflict. The aim is obviously to consolidate peace and to prevent the resurgence of conflict. The cases that the Security Council has been dealing with during this month attests to that development. Whether it be in the Balkans, West Africa, Afghanistan or Iraq, peace-building as the core element of post-conflict order is the great challenge that we are facing.

Efforts to find a non-military solution in Iraq failed. Parts of the country lie in disarray. Millions of people need basic services to be restored so that their lives can regain a basic degree of normalcy. We must begin peace-building in Iraq by providing the most urgent humanitarian relief to the people who are suffering as a consequence of the conflict and by restoring peace and security to a people that has been suffering from three wars and dictatorship over the past decades. The Security Council, I think, has managed successfully in this phase by unanimously adopting resolutions 1472 (2003) and 1476 (2003) — resolutions that are urgently needed to prevent a breakdown in the supply of essential humanitarian goods. Also, the United Nations has launched a flash appeal to enable the agencies to launch their humanitarian programmes.

An important initial phase of every peace-building effort is the introduction of a political process that requires the cooperation of the warring parties and the will of the people concerned and that takes into account the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, with a view to establishing legitimate authority and rebuilding infrastructure. In the case of Afghanistan, the Petersberg Conference — held under United Nations auspices — launched such a process, which might serve as a model for the future. In September this year, the Afghans will, it is to be hoped, convene a Loya Jirga and adopt a new constitution — a further milestone on the path to building a free and stable nation.

This task is not easy. Every crisis is different, as the Secretary-General and the representative of the United States said today; there is no general recipe applicable to the solution of each and every conflict. Nevertheless, we think that peace-building requires a comprehensive strategy that includes the following elements: the establishment of security, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants; the launching of a political process leading to legitimate institutions and international recognition; economic development, including infrastructure and environmental issues; justice and reconciliation; and social development.

Peace-building can be successful only if it is broadly supported by the international community, in particular the afflicted region. What we heard about the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, I think, supported that. A conflict in one country can result in the destabilization of a whole region. Therefore, the solution of this conflict also requires the region's consent and support. Only if the work done is accepted by a large majority of the people in the conflict area can we envisage a lasting and sustainable solution to the threat to international peace and security.

Therefore, Germany firmly believes that this task can best be managed and accomplished by the United Nations and the Security Council. The United Nations — as the sole universal Organization responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security — has the capability, the legitimacy and the credibility that are needed. The capabilities of the United Nations in this field should be fully used and further developed. In the past 10 years, the United Nations has gained unique experience in this field.

This United Nations task does not, of course, exclude the work of other actors on the scene: international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, Member States and, of course, the international financial institutions. On the contrary, the complexity of the needs and the high degree of required resources make it necessary to assemble non-governmental organizations, Member States, the international financial institutions and important regional organizations in the task of peace-building. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, for example, has played an important role in the Caucasus, and only yesterday we heard impressive presentations by Foreign Ministers of States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) concerning their role in Côte d'Ivoire. Non-governmental organizations and other players are essential in working together with the United Nations, especially in the humanitarian field.

Peace-building in post-conflict situations is simultaneously an exercise in conflict prevention. It helps to prevent the resurgence of old conflicts, as well as the emergence of new conflicts arising from instability and insecurity. Peace-building is therefore an indispensable element of the crisis-management triad of conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peace-building.

The next presidency will face a number of difficult tasks. It will be up to the Council to see to it that peace is secured in Iraq so that it will remain stable and that the legal framework to administer that country, its resources and its reconstruction needs is forged. The legitimate rights of the Iraqi people have to be protected. As the Secretary-General pointed out, the Security Council will have to take difficult decisions on a variety of questions — on the issues of sanctions, the oil-for-food programme and the inspections system, as well as on a legitimate authority and on decision-making on behalf of the Iraqi people.

We believe that the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, should play a central role in rebuilding peace, stability and prosperity in Iraq, as the heads of State and Government of the member States of the European Union recently stated at their summit meeting at Athens. We sincerely hope that the Security Council will overcome its past differences and that it will return to its unity of purpose for the sake of legitimacy and effectiveness and for the sake of the well-being of the Iraqi people.

In thanking the Mexican presidency for a job well done, I would also like to wish the new presidency every success in moving forward with the difficult issues on our agenda.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting, which gives us an opportunity to discuss in the Security Council a matter of great importance and relevance for the international community as a whole with representatives of various regions, namely, the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations. This meeting also serves as an appropriate culmination of the President's excellent guidance of the Council in the month that ends today. We would also like to express our gratitude for the participation of the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in today's meeting.

The maintenance of peace and security, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the achievement of general and complete disarmament are universally recognized principles of the United Nations. As has been repeatedly stated this morning, one of the most important functions that the United Nations has carried out with increasing intensity in this area in recent years has been its work in post-conflict situations, which has acquired particular momentum, gravity and frequency in the various regions of the world. In that regard, it is worth keeping in mind the generic, underlying character of every post-conflict situation.

We must start with the supposition that the pre-existing order has either been shut out or obliterated following the death, destruction of property and social trauma resulting from the resort to violence of the parties involved in a clash of interests. Affected societies require that a new order be built that will, above all else, impede a return to conflict. Such an undertaking necessities the emergence of a legitimate centre of power that expresses the self-determination of its people. It also requires international recognition that enables its full integration into the community of nations. Such a society, regime or new order will therefore have to have international legitimacy.

It is in such cases that the United Nations has, in its brief history, endeavoured to play a decisive role through the Security Council. It has sought to do so by monitoring ceasefire agreements and by establishing peacekeeping forces, as well as by setting up more

complex and demanding operations, including the administration of territories experiencing conflict in every aspect. In some cases that has included developing the foundations necessary to establish the institutional capacity of a State. The United Nations has done such work on the basis of its nature as the unique and irreplaceable institution operating on behalf of the entire international community under the authority and mandate stemming from a Charter universally accepted and respected and in the name of the entire international community.

However, we are well aware of the fact that results have been mixed over the years. From the deployment of peacekeeping operations in the post-colonial world after 1958 to the 40 peacekeeping operations deployed between 1988 and 1999, the United Nations has experienced success and failure in equal measure. The cases of Angola, Mozambique and Timor-Leste — which just two days ago we were pleased to discuss around this table — illustrate the fact that the contribution of the United Nations to peacemaking, and even to the building of a new State, can indeed be very successful. At the same time, however, the debacles in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia and Rwanda are still in recent memory.

There are also situations of protracted complexity. While we can today take note of the stabilization, creation of institutions and beginnings of a real political process in Kosovo, we must also acknowledge the difficulties in controlling violence and the ethnic harassment and obstacles to domestic dialogue that exist there. In other words, the difficulty and complexity of the task do not guarantee a process of ongoing improvement, but rather a permanent and inevitable learning process in which every situation has its own particular character.

Throughout the years, we have observed that some situations seem to guarantee that there will be serious problems. When action is undertaken under conditions of an unstable ceasefire; when the Security Council adopts unclear mandates or establishes missions lacking adequate resources; when the Council does not follow up its own mandates — in short, when there is not the necessary political will to act multilaterally in utilizing the mechanisms and provisions established by the Charter, problems will emerge that will be difficult to overcome.

On the other hand, having the participation of the populations concerned and their prompt embrace of the principle of self-determination, as well as the existence of cooperation and dialogue with regional agencies and bodies — which, as we saw yesterday with the example of Africa, are capable of taking the initiative to strengthen and back up local efforts — and, above all, the resolve of the members of the Security Council to act in concert on the basis of concrete and responsible agreements that are rooted in the belief that multilateral action is indispensable — all this may not necessarily guarantee the absence of problems, but it will establish a stable foundation for peace.

Notwithstanding the enormous problems in Afghanistan, we can today denote a legitimate power base there that will make it possible to build a country different from what it used to be. In order for that to occur, however, the United Nations must possess the determination and political will I have just mentioned.

In addition, the United Nations made a significant contribution in the Americas in the early 1990s in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, where it helped to end the war that was destroying those societies. The appointment of a permanent representative of the Secretary-General, the establishment of military observer missions, the creation of human rights commissions and later the electoral process itself made it possible for the United Nations to orchestrate the dialogue between the various factions, put an end to violence and, above all, turn that process, the last conflict of the cold war, into a legitimate solution that involved the entire region, while, at the same time, preserving the interests involved and launching the democratic process in those countries.

It seems to us that these experiences could be extremely useful for the Council as it considers the grave problems that it needs to resolve in coming weeks, to which the Secretary-General so rightly referred at the beginning of this meeting.

If we look ahead at the situation in Iraq, it would seem necessary to collate and learn from these experiences. They may help to ensure that the vital role of the United Nations in the rebuilding of that country is secured — something that all members of the Council have stated that they wished to see.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Mexico.

The United Nations is the source of, and the forum in which, the main arrangements and agreements have been achieved that govern modern international relations. The United Nations sets out principles and norms and undertakes commitments that are basis for coexistence between countries. We must recognize, however, that the vision of the United Nations is still, to a large extent, an ideal that remains to be achieved. But it is a valid ideal, to which political, intellectual and social leaders aspire to all around the world.

The United Nations is founded on a tremendous collective force — humanity's aspirations to peace. In every crisis the United Nations is reborn, and its purposes and principles are confirmed and renewed. In this Chamber we have repeatedly addressed the limitations of the United Nations, the persistent failure to ensure compliance with some of its resolutions, and the vital need to reform it.

However, to date the United Nations has been the best creation of the international community. As we see it, it is the only option for curbing war and minimizing the use of force in international relations. To date we have not always found the way to prevent conflicts. Experience teaches us that as long as the original causes remain that gave rise to conflicts, then those conflicts will probably re-emerge sooner of later in one form or another. For that reason, we need to find a way to strengthen the role of the United Nations in reconstruction tasks. This must be the focus of immediate and future discussions of its component bodies.

We owe a great deal to the United Nations in terms of the preservation and improvement of the quality of our lives. To the United Nations, to a large extent, we owe the little or much that has been achieved in the banning of weapons of mass destruction, controlling environmental degradation, combating endemic diseases, achieving equality for women and protecting children in conflict situations.

The United Nations is multidimensional and multifaceted. Among the characteristics that best reflect the multiple dimensions of the United Nations are its diversity and its capabilities. In the context of the role that it recently played in the reconstruction of communities devastated by war, these capabilities have been seen in action.

Peace is still a goal that escapes us. However, in the many and, indeed, contrasting experiences of the United Nations in post-conflict periods, we are finding a way towards genuine peace. As each conflict breaks out, we can find, in the violence and the hatred and resentment that erupt in every war, the seeds of another conflict and another war. There are regions such as the Middle East where this chain appears to be endless.

For that reason, United Nations post-conflict peace-building operations must be the best possible instrument to break this vicious circle. In Timor-Leste, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, the conditions of the conflict are different, but the objectives for the United Nations are alike: rebuilding communities; supporting them in their efforts to find settlements and viable ways of ensuring political life; supporting them in the creation of institutions; and giving them the means to address the most serious humanitarian situations, while safeguarding human rights.

Every situation presents special challenges. In Kosovo, success has to be measured in terms of the extent to which multi-ethnicity is achieved, not through forced measures but as an expression of plurality and shared wealth. In Afghanistan, the measure of success, among other things, will be the degree to which women are fully incorporated into the economic, political and social life of that country. In Sierra Leone, one of the key tasks on which its future will depend is achieving disarmament, demobilization and the full and fair reintegration of former combatants and mercenaries, many of them children, along with the effective banning of small arms and light weapons as means to achieve shared prosperity in that country.

In Timor-Leste, the efforts of the United Nations have focused on the creation of a national entity that will be the expression of the aspirations of a country that must leave behind segregation and violence. In each of these places, the United Nations has understood that the key is taking a comprehensive approach, as well as working jointly and in consultation with all component bodies and with all countries interested in promoting reconstruction.

Similarly, the United Nations has had to understand and draw upon the work of organizations of civil society and non-governmental organizations. The Security Council's obligation is to pursue these tasks on the basis of clear mandates backed up by resources that will make it possible to perform such tasks successfully.

To that end, the lines of communication between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and between the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, need to be more flexible. My delegation is grateful for the attendance and participation of the Presidents of the Economic and Social Council and of the General Assembly at this meeting. This underscores the shared purposes that should exist throughout our Organization.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, emphasized the importance of this unity of principle and purpose. In the case of Iraq, the divisions in the Security Council have been deep-seated and fundamental. They have to do with a way of understanding and applying the principles and norms that govern the authorization of the use of force, pursuant to the San Francisco Charter.

Given the events that have taken place, these differences will not be resolved in discussions or in mere statements. However, we are in duty bound to overcome them effectively for the benefit of this Organization. We cannot ignore or underestimate the elements that have divided us. We must overcome them. This will be achieved only if we work on the basis of unity of purpose with respect to the role that the United Nations should play in the reconstruction of Iraq.

This unity of purpose will have to be based on the definitions that the Secretary-General himself has delineated this morning. The key to reconstruction must be the inalienable right of Iraqis to decide their own future, defining for themselves the new political and institutional arrangements through which they will try to achieve their national aspirations. The United Nations is an Organization based on principles. Without principles, its existence and mission would have no meaning. In this regard, the future of the Iraqi people should lie in their own hands. The people of Iraq must recover full exercise of their sovereignty, with the support of the United Nations.

Likewise, the United Nations should help to safeguard the territorial integrity of the country and, above all, give guarantees that the natural resources of the Iraqis will be used by them and for them.

The United Nations role in Iraq also deeply involves the promotion of the human, political, civil, economic and social rights of the Iraqi people through the promotion of development and the protection of the environment. This Organization must also help to maintain and safeguard the religious and cultural identity of that country and to preserve its archaeological and cultural heritage.

However imperfect the international order may be, we have normative instruments to which all States involved should subscribe. Of particular importance at this time is compliance with the conventions relative to humanitarian protection, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention. In conformity with that Convention, the immediate needs of the Iraqis must be met. Above and beyond that obligation on the occupying Powers, the United Nations should organize and coordinate international humanitarian assistance in Iraq. If we agree on the principles, we must also agree on the tasks and responsibilities to be shared.

Mexico is convinced that the United Nations is today the best instrument for finding multilateral solutions to the challenges of peace-building and for fostering international cooperation in solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems. The Organization can dispense with none of these purposes without losing its raison d'être. Post-conflict reconstruction is bound up with them all. The relevance and future of this Organization largely depend on the decisions and consensuses on those purposes that we reach at this time.

I should like to thank the members of the Council for the support they have offered the delegation of Mexico as it discharged its functions and strove to reach understandings and to promote the initiatives under discussion by the Council in the course of this month. I wish also to thank the Secretary-General and the entire Secretariat team that serves us in the Council for their tremendous support. I particularly thank the interpreters, who often have to speak even faster than we do.

I wish the delegation of Pakistan every success as it assumes the presidency of the Security Council tomorrow.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.55 p.m.